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Raymond Scicluna
Skrivan tal-Kamra

Annual Report 2018

Superintendence of Cultural Heritage

SOVRINTENDENZA
TAL-PATRIMONJU KULTURALI

SUPERINTENDENCE OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

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Foreword

In March 2018, the then Superintendent of Cultural Heritage Dr Anthony Pace moved into another post as the Co-ordinator of Malta's World Heritage Tentative List. Joseph Magro Conti succeeded Dr Pace as Superintendent as from 28 March 2018 following a handover to ensure a smooth transition as well as embark on the restructuring of the organisation, services and processes to reflect the demands of the time.

Priority was given to the creation of positive dialogue with and between several key players in the cultural heritage sector. This ensured a comprehensive understanding of the main issues being encountered by the Superintendence and the wider cultural heritage sector.

Understanding issues: On taking office the Superintendent immediately carried out one-to-one meetings with various operators, namely:

- SCH staff;
- former Superintendent (Dr Anthony Pace) – several meetings
- former Deputy Superintendent (Mr Nathaniel Cutajar);
- cultural heritage stakeholders (Committee of Guarantee, Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee, Heritage Malta, University of Malta; Malta's Ambassador for UNESCO);
- Ministries, architects, Planning Authority, Environment Resources Authority, Restoration Directorate, Malta Developers Association, independent developers, and NGOs amongst others.
- Archaeological Service Providers registered with the SCH and a networking meeting together with SCH officers to highlight and discuss main findings from the one-to-one meetings and meetings with stakeholders.

Operations Review of the SCH: Concurrently, the incoming Superintendent personally carried out an Operations Review of the SCH. The main findings were the following:

- the SCH needed to be better organised, financed and resourced in the optimal manner to support its mission and objectives at set out by the Cultural Heritage Act, 2002 (CHA) and reflect the current demands;
- the day-to-day operations of the SCH did not work smoothly as they should, in particular with regards to responses to planning consultation and archaeological monitoring. This was mainly due to the shortage of human resources dedicated to this area coupled with a significant increase of development-related cases and issues being referred to the SCH. Development applications are time-constrained and statutory reaction time requirement ranges from 5, 15 or 30 calendar days with a workload of 200 cases weekly tackled by only four officers;
- there was a lack of congruence between the current SCH organisational chart, the agency's legal remit and the Cultural Heritage Strategy (CHS 2012-17);
- the agency's structure was very horizontal and loosely affiliated, missing middle management and line management, as well as key units and expertise.

It was not the optimum structure to support the mission and objectives as set by the CHA and the CHS;

- the human resources required were not sufficient to administer the legal requirements and the CHS in number, qualifications, specialisations, specifications and quality;
- the SCH provided its several services free of charge. The SCH would still not meet the amount required to guarantee self-finance. Consequently, a degree of financial support from Government would still be required;
- due to lack of staff and resources certain important functions were carried out *ad hoc*, such as: administration, legal disputes, control of movement of movables, inventories and scheduling, and corporate obligations. Other tasks had to be placed on the back burner or dormant, such as public outreach, and participation in EU projects;
- the few officers extant at the SCH were mostly valid on what they were working on, but further competent officers are necessary to tackle the amount of work within the required time frames. Sourcing of such officers is potentially from public service and public sector agencies through loans, detailing, transfer, re-deployment – especially officers with heritage-related and planning-related qualifications, experience and motivation – as well as through external recruitment;
- the SCH also encountered problems of efficiency due to the inadequacy of office premises, furniture and equipment, lack of an updated ICT infrastructure and software, lack of pool cars for inspections, and other resources.

IT appraisal: an internal appraisal to determine the adequacy of the IT infrastructure, hardware and software, as well as the telephony system shown that the system has become inefficient. It was also noted that the problem would be severely compounded with the increase of staff, PCs, software and data for which further funds are required. Nonetheless, by the end of 2018 the network was improved and a new telephony system catering for fifty (50) sets was installed through available funds. The SCH is working on installing an improved server and backup system, and a GIS (Geographical Information System) which is a major *desideratum* to facilitate data management, surveillance, planning consultations, restoration and archaeological monitoring, research and public outreach.

Re-structuring: Effort in this area included a revised organisational chart for the SCH based on statutory functions, workloads and response timeframes, a Human Resources Plan, an ICT appraisal (and necessary upgrades), re-definition of office spaces, fittings, furniture and equipment audit, state of maintenance. The above was followed up with internal re-organisation of space to increase office allocation, and the introduction of two pool cars for site inspections.

A request for alternative premises for the SCH was also made and a select number of sites were proposed. A couple of sites were considered to have good potential but may only be secured for the SCH within two to three years. In the interim the SCH is

required to make use of the current premises and carry out any necessary upgrades in order to be able to function at optimal level.

Recruitment and capacity building: In December 2017 a call for the engagement of professional officers was issued and interviews held in January 2018. Between July and September 2018 sixteen (16) officers were recruited with SCH – thirteen (13) professional Executive Officers to work on planning consultations, archaeological monitoring and movable heritage; as well as a clerk, an IT support officer and a receptionist. The newly employed Executive Officers were given a 7-week induction training that included lectures and coaching on the use of the planning application portal, mentored sessions as well as hands-on experience. A further five (5) professional officers with heritage-related qualifications and experience were brought on loan from the Planning Authority in November 2018 to fill in lacunae in the structure and partly as transfer of business (restoration monitoring and inventories) to lessen duplication and gaps as well as introduce other skills that were lacking at SCH (such as maritime archaeology).

Procedural "audit" of archaeological monitoring process: major efforts were made during 2018 to assess the performance of internal and external procedures by SCH as well as that of the archaeological service providers. Some simplification measures were immediately implemented. These consisted mainly in: introducing weekly internal sessions to decide on and close pending cases; increase in the number of site inspections focusing on giving on-the-spot direction and decisions; increased frequency of liaison and availability to archaeological service providers; scientific investigation of certain features by sampling instead of total investigation; and increased monitoring by inspection (as opposed to continuous monitoring) in areas of lesser prediction. Additionally, the SCH has already introduced cautiously an element of self-regulation by the architect/applicant/contractor in cases of excavations close to Second World War air-raid shelters. Further reforms to increase efficiency and simplification are in progress.

Procedural "audit" of planning consultation process: progress was also made in refining timing and quality of recommendations made on development planning applications. As from May 2016 all Full Development Application started to be referred to the SCH for consultation, resulting in an average of 200 cases weekly (2018). New cases are now being filtered to select and provide an early reply on cases that have no or little bearing on cultural heritage. These are estimated to amount to approximately a quarter of development applications received from the Planning Authority. Major projects and complex projects are flagged at an early stage of the process. Consultation response output is now consistently at 100%, whereas in previous years not all applications were being replied to in time owing to lack of officers. Within the same statutory time-frames officers are also prioritising site inspections and meetings with *periti* before replying to the first consultation. Before the intake of new staff such measures had to be taken at a later stage in the process. Rationalisation when recommending archaeological monitoring during the planning consultation stage was also given priority during 2018 to focus on sites having greater predictability.

Financial resources and limitations: a review of SCH business model needs to be carried out. The need for more officers was accentuated by the 2016 MEPA reforms by which all development applications were referred to all statutory consultees, which significantly increased the workload of the SCH.

In December 2017 the Minister responsible for Culture pledged to increase the SCH staff complement with twenty (20) officers in view of the increased demand on the SCH from Planning Authority consultations. Development planning consultations have risen from 1,099 requests in 2015, to 5,412 in 2016 and just under 10,000 in 2018. The workload was being dealt with by no more than four (4) SCH officers throughout. A downward trend in the number of planning consultations *per capita* – i.e. from an average of 60.67 consultations/week/SCH officer between June and September 2018 down to an average of 22.75 consultations/week/SCH officer – only came about further to the engagement and training of new SCH officers (refer to chart in Section 2 below).

In March 2018 the staff compliment at the SCH was of fifteen (15) with five (5) officers intending to change job. The budgetary allocation reflects the staff complement that there had been before. The situation was further exasperated by the inadequacy of the IT system, this apart from a host of other institutional, procedural problems and lack of other resources.

Next steps (2019): SCH already has an approved recruitment plan for 2019, and has plans for induction training and allocating officers and administrative staff on tasks according to the plan to further meet its business functions and improve efficiency and effectiveness. SCH will attempt to secure the necessary funds for a data server with backups and GIS, as well as prioritise training of officers in GIS as well as other areas of expertise. The SCH aims to embark on a public outreach programme. This will be highly dependent on the resources made available.

The Annual Report 2018 provides a qualitative and quantitative overview of the main operations of the SCH during calendar year 2018. When available, comparisons with previous years (2015, 2016 and 2017) are also provided.

Joseph Magro Conti
Superintendent of Cultural Heritage

1. Data Management

The National Protective Inventory: Immovable Heritage

During 2018, focus was mainly directed at improving the presentation and accessibility of the existing inventory, primarily through its conversion into spatial data so that it is made available on a GIS (Geographic Information System) in 2019. The Superintendence has therefore not expanded its National Inventory in the year under review.

The Superintendence is evaluating a number of possibilities as to which software would be the most appropriate for its system. Considerations will also need to find a balance between the costs involved and the IT environment required for supporting the chosen system as well as the compatibility with software and systems already in use by other entities with whom the SCH interacts. Following the conversion to spatial data of the existing inventory, the Superintendence will proceed with further data capture so as to augment the current inventory entries.

The Superintendence also plans to review its archives so as to publish more comprehensive and usable information relating to as yet unpublished archaeological discoveries made since its inception, as well as discoveries made under the tenure of Museum's Department prior to 2003. The Superintendence has also initiated talks with the Planning Authority and other entities to seek collaboration in the exchange of Cultural Heritage Data to create a more comprehensive inventory.

Additionally, the Superintendence will be participating in an EU project - SintegraM, which is being led by the Planning Authority. The scope of this project is for the creation of a strategy for National Spatial Data Infrastructure as well as harmonisation across government departments and agencies with regards to spatial data formats with the scope of having a common platform accessible to all stakeholders. The Superintendence will thus be focused on the conversion of its inventory into spatial data for integration into SintegraM.

Capacity building and Training

Through a PA led EU Project – SpatialTRAIN (which is the training component of the SintegraM project), eleven (11) officers of the Superintendence have applied to follow accredited courses in Geomatics at Levels 4 and 5, which courses are envisaged to commence in May 2019. This will provide the Superintendence with a core of trained officers who will be conversant with the creation and analysis of spatial data, which will be essential in the augmentation of the existing inventory, improving the accessibility of cultural heritage data, and thus increasing the efficiency in the carrying out of the Superintendence's core tasks.

Concurrently, four (4) Superintendence officers have applied for enrolment to follow the certificate in Baroque Studies (level 4) offered by the University of Malta, which course commence in February 2019.

2. Land Use and Planning Matters

Planning Consultations: Land-use and development planning applications

During the year under review, the Superintendence continued fulfilling its role as a designated statutory external consultee to the Planning Authority on land use and development planning applications.

The staff complement within the planning consultation section at the beginning of 2018 was of four officials. One official changed job in the first half of 2018 and another in the second half of 2018.

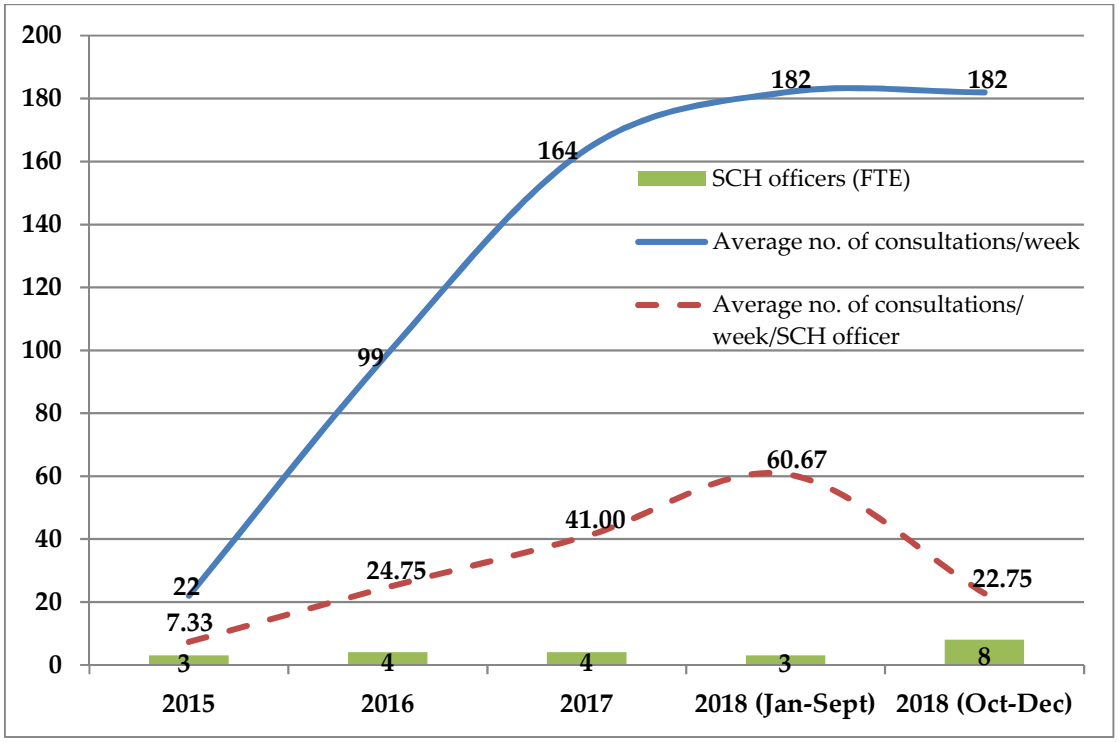
Overview and main achievements: During 2018, the planning consultations section focused on responding to consultation requests by Planning Authority. During the second half of 2018 focus was also directed towards staff training of new intakes. Although not all intakes eventually joined the planning consultation section, all new intakes (13 in number) received training in planning consultation processes. Of the thirteen new recruits, six officials joined the planning consultation section, increasing the staff complement to eight, as well as one official focusing on providing administrative assistance to the planning consultations section. Other members of staff within the Superintendence also contribute towards the planning consultation processes as necessary.

The increase in staff came about a full two years after the change in planning legislation (Development Planning Act of 2016, as implemented by Legal Notice 162 of 2016, Development Planning (Procedure for Applications and their Determination) Regulations). As reported in the Annual Report 2017 the assessment of development planning applications and the provision of the statutory consultations required by Planning Authority had become "the single most onerous commitment of the Superintendence, taking up 95% of the organisation's workload".

Following seven weeks of induction training (for two separate groups of intakes), which included lecture sessions, job-shadowing and group work, the increase in human resources within the planning consultations section allowed the Superintendence to direct its focus towards:

- improving its reaction time to responding to planning consultation requests by Planning Authority;
- increasing the number of inspections brought about by development applications;

- addressing delays and introducing a more pro-active approach to site inspections and meetings with third parties brought about by development applications.

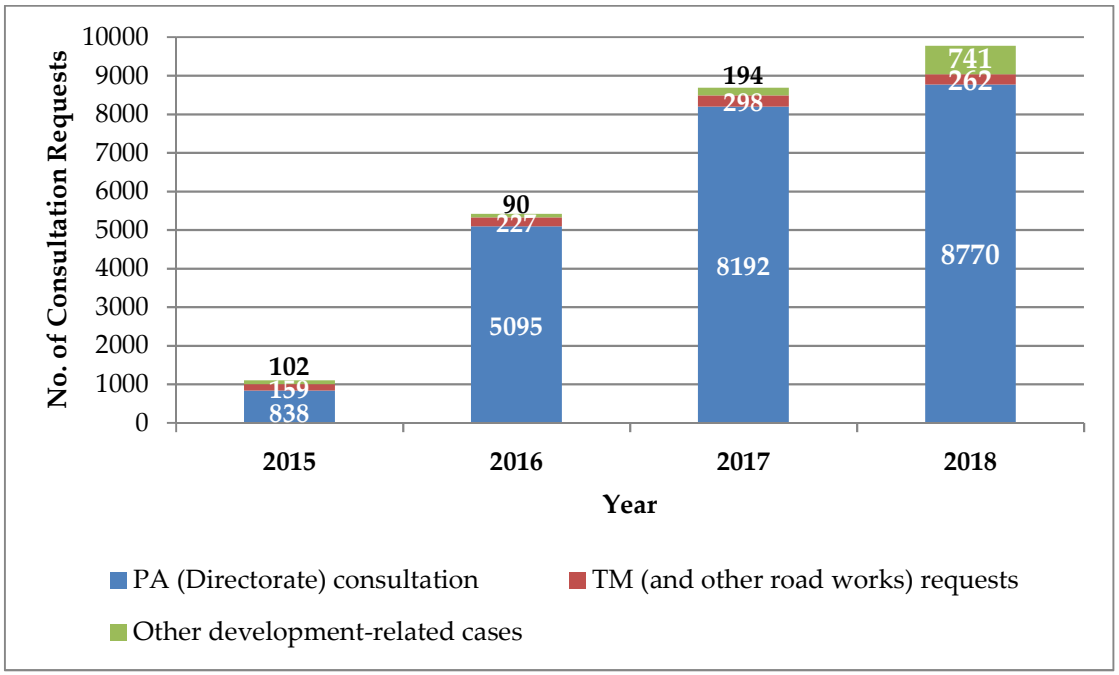


The above chart gives a graphical representation of how the workload within the planning consultation section changed over the period 2015 till 2018. The average number of development planning consultations received by the Superintendence on a weekly basis is juxtaposed with the number of SCH officers (*FTE: Full Time Equivalence*) working within the section. The average number of consultations handled by each officer every week in 2018 (between January and September) reached an average of 61. This value was reduced to an average of 23 consultations a week for each SCH officer between October and December 2018.

In 2019, there will be further engagement by the Superintendence to filter development planning consultations at an early stage of the process to permit SCH officers to dedicate their attention on cases that are predominantly of cultural heritage concern.

Planning consultations in numbers: The number of planning consultation requests received by the Superintendence continued to increase in 2018. The total number of consultation requests received increased nine-fold between 2015 (the year preceding the change in planning legislation) and 2018 (the year under review. In 2018 the total number of consultations received amounted to **9773**, up from **1099** in 2015. Since not

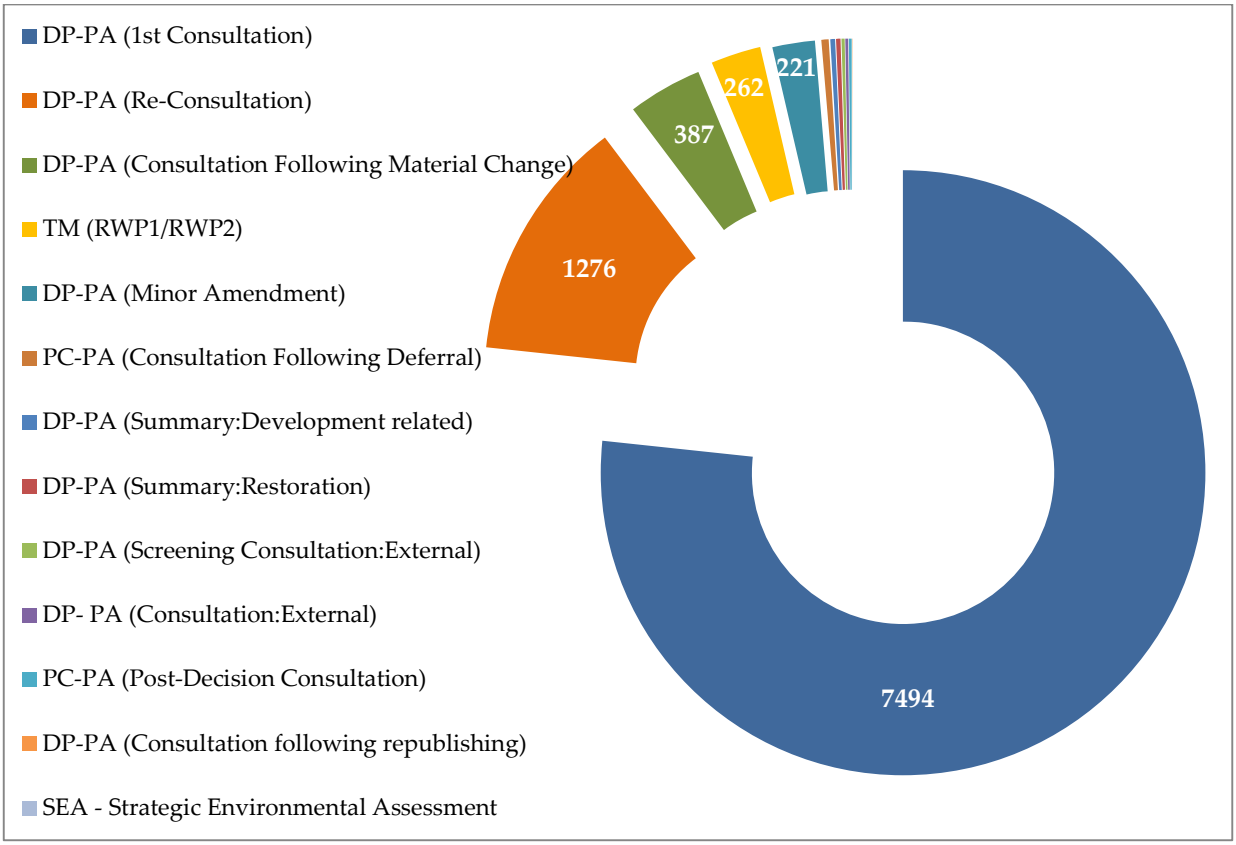
all the data for the various consultation types was collected (refer to table below), the 9773 figure is actually higher.



Development planning consultations (i.e. first consultation and re-consultations) increased from **8192** to **8770** – a **7% increase** over the previous year. The greatest percentage increase from 2017 was noted in 'other development-related cases' category – **282%** - from **194** in 2017 to **741** in 2018. 'Other development-related cases' include planning processes such as minor amendment application, consultation further to deferral or a decision at Planning Commission stage, Summary applications and others. Refer to charts and tables for more information.

A slight decrease was registered in the number of consultation requests received from Transport Malta (and other road works) requests. The Superintendence received **262** requests in 2018, amounting to 36 consultation requests fewer than in the previous year. The 2018 value was however still higher that the consultation requests received in 2016 (227 requests), and significantly higher than in 2015 (159 requests).

Over 97% (**9511**) of the consultation requests received in 2018 originated from the Planning Authority, with the remaining 3% (**262**) originating from Transport Malta, as shown in more detail in the chart and table below.



Type of Consultation Received	**2018**
DP-PA[1] (1st consultation)	7494
DP-PA (Re-consultation)	1276
DP-PA (Consultation Following Material Change)	387
TM[2] (RWP1/RWP2)	262
DP-PA (Minor Amendment)	221
PC-PA[3] (Consultation Following Deferral)	39
DP-PA (Summary: Development related)	24
DP-PA (Summary: Restoration)	23
DP-PA (Screening Consultation: External)	16
DP- PA (Consultation: External)	15
PC-PA (Post-Decision Consultation)	14
DP-PA (Consultation following republishing)	2
SEA - Strategic Environmental Assessment	0
DP-PA (DNO)	DNC[4]
DP-PA (DS)	DNC
ERA[5] (EIA)	DNC
Other - Third Party Consultations	DNC

1 DP-PA: Directorate Planning-Planning Authority
2 TM: Transport Malta
3 PC-PA: Planning Commission-Planning Authority
4 DNC: Data not collected
5 ERA: Environment and Resources Authority

Other sources: The Superintendence also received and engaged with consultation requests from other sources – a few of these are listed above. Since these requests were received from multiple sources and by different SCH officials the exact number requests received were not quantified.

Planning Tribunal (Appeals): As a statutory consultee in the planning process the Superintendence receives notification that an appeal has been lodged to the Environment and Planning Review Tribunal. The Tribunal may also request that the Superintendent attends a sitting and acts as external consultant or witness in the procedures.

Surveillance

As part of its regulatory function and in keeping with its role at law, the Superintendence is also responsible to carry out surveillance to ensure the protection of the cultural heritage. The need for surveillance may come about:

- in response to third party reports from the public or police reports informing of damage (or threat of damage) to the cultural heritage;
- by officials of the Superintendence during the implementation of their duties;
- further to accidental discoveries made during works carried out that may impact on the cultural heritage.

In any of the above situations follow-up action may require a site inspection followed by direct enforcement action by the Superintendence, and the issuing of a 'Conservation and Protection Order' of a 'notification to stop works' as the case may be, with subsequent imposition of conditions or measures to safeguard the cultural heritage. Depending on the nature and circumstances of the infringement the Superintendence may liaise with the Enforcement Directorate of the Planning Authority, or request police action.

No full-time officer was dedicated to this function in 2018. Notwithstanding, in 2018 the Superintendence implemented its surveillance function on fifty five (55) occasions.

Scheduling Proposals

Presently, the Superintendence in conjunction with the Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee provides consultation replies to the Planning Authority with regards to scheduling proposals or de-scheduling or re-grading and corrections that were initiated by the Planning Authority.

During 2018, the Superintendence was consulted on a number of scheduling or de-scheduling requests which are summarised as follows:

Scheduling

Miscellaneous 2018:

- a group of 13 properties identified as meriting protection through the assessment of planning applications;
- Villa Ciantar, Pieta – a historic property with formal gardens;
- Villa Barbaro Bellosguardo, Attard – a historic property.

De-scheduling

- Part of garden at Villa Curmi, Zejtun – a historic villa with formal gardens;
- Lower garden, Villa Buleben, Zejtun – a historic palazzo with formal and informal gardens.

Following loan of staff and some transfer of business (assessment of building restoration and monitoring, and scheduling proposals) from the Planning Authority's Heritage Planning Unit to the Superintendence (in the last quarter of 2018), discussions are underway to review current scheduling procedures. Legally, scheduling will be retained within the Planning Authority's remit as regulated by the Planning Act. However, the Superintendence will be more involved in initiating scheduling proposals in line with its obligations as arising from the Cultural Heritage Act (CAP 445).

The Superintendence will be more heavily involved in the research and evaluation required for supporting scheduling proposals as well as making formal and final proposals directly to the Planning Authority's Executive Council, for a final decision on scheduling.

Major Projects

As part of the planning consultation process, the Superintendence is also requested by the Planning Authority to make recommendations on major projects. The time-frames afforded for these major projects are the same as those for full development applications (30 days).

A list of a few major development applications, including major infrastructural or restoration projects, tackled by the Superintendence in 2018 will be included in an augmented version of the 2018 Annual Report.

PA No.	Site at	Comments
PA 00028/18 PA 00946/18	St. John's Co-Cathedral Museum, Triq San Gwann c/w Triq il-Merkanti c/w, Triq Santa Lucija, Valletta	Reflecting the cultural heritage value of the property and the high profile of the project, the Superintendence continued in its engagement with monitoring of approved works, even with the intent of providing guidance to the proposed design.
PA 03215/16	Is-Suq Tal-Belt, Triq Merkanti/Triq Felic/Triq it-Teatru/Triq San Pawl, Valletta	Further engagement within the rehabilitation of this significant Victorian market place including improving visibility of Knight's Period structures uncovered during works, as well as their interpretation.
PA 01399/15	Auberge D'Italie, Triq il-Merkanti, Triq Melita, Tia San Zakkarija, Pjazza De Vallette, Valletta	MUŻA - Advised and monitored major project for the housing and presentation of Malta's Fine Arts collection ensuring an end product of great social and cultural value while ensuring the preservation and conservation of architectural significant spaces and fabric.
PA 08732/18	Tattingers Club, Rainbow Apartments & Properties 1, 5, 6, 8, Telgha tas-Saqqajja and Property 1, Triq tal-Infetti, Mdina	Large-scale project located on the Knight's Period military glacis with a potential impact on existing views and vistas of Mdina. This development application is also being reviewed by the UNESCO World Heritage Technical Committee.
PA 01383/18	Triq id-Difiza Civili, Triq Tal-Qares, Mosta	In order to ensure the protection of surviving archaeological features as had been identified in earlier investigations the Superintendence liaised with the architects resulting in a design that preserves the features and permits access to several of the features.
PA 06835/16	Site at, Triq Marsalforn, Xaghra	The Superintendence made recommendations in favour of the preservation and integration of a vernacular building, underlying rock-cut spaces, as well as on the proposed volumes and masses. The site footprint overlooks open countryside (*Wied Ġnien Imrik*) and is located above a series of caves.
PA 03811/14 PA 00870/18 PA 00874/18 PA 01126/18 PA 02420/18	Ruzar Briffa, St. Vincent de Paul Residence, Triq L-Ingiered, Triq Hal Qormi, Luqa	Superintendence engaged on application linked to the refurbishment of the existing hospital giving direction on the preservation of the legibility of the significant architecture. Superintendence also engaged with ongoing extensions giving direction on re-design in the light of archaeological discoveries uncovered during preliminary works.

PA 10840/18 PA 09407/17 PA 08373/18 PA 08605/18 PA 08650/18 PA 08773/18	Manoel Island Yacht Marina, off, Triq ix-Xatt, Manoel Island, Gzira	Superintendence continued with its long-standing engagement with various applications linked to the overall master plan for Manuel Island. Major cultural heritage issues include the identification and preservation of historical buildings and ongoing excavations, even of historical cemeteries with the intent of guiding ongoing and proposed development.
PA 06042/18	No 20, Old Civil Abattoir, Triq il-Gendus c/w Triq San Kristofru c/w, Triq San Karlu, Valletta	Further engagement with ongoing major project for the rehabilitation and re-utilisation of significant historical building. Current development application was linked to the final appearance of the project including a novel design solution of the roof involving a roof garden.
PA 06697/17	179, Wembley Ice Cream Factory, Triq D'Argens /, Triq De Brocktorff, Msida	Further to discussions and additional review of various design options, the Superintendence gave guidance on treatment of the scheduled façade of an extensive property. The end result was an integration of the scheduled façade into a proposed design that strongly evokes the art-deco style of the original façade.
PA 01334/18	Bettina Palace, 5, 6, Triq San Gorg c/w, Triq Wenzu Dyer, Birgu	Superintendence engaged with a proposed amendment to an approved design within a scheduled property. Superintendence reviews various design options in discussion with the architect leading to a design that was aesthetically acceptable while preserving legibility of historical spaces.
PA 05367/16	Notarial Archives, 24, Triq San Kristorfu c/w, Triq San Pawl, Valletta	In collaboration with the Restoration Directorate the Superintendence alterations and restoration works within this historically significant building. The interventions were aimed to enhance its historical function while extending its contemporary relevance, all while preserving and conserving the historical fabric.

Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee

Further to the reform involving the former Malta Environment and Planning Authority in 2016, the Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee (CHAC) was relocated under the remit of the Minister responsible for cultural heritage. The members of the CHAC were appointed by the Minister for Justice, Culture and Local Government on 25 August 2018 for a period of three years.

The CHAC makes recommendations to the Superintendence on development-related issues and scheduling/de-scheduling requests. In 2018, presentations on the above were carried out on five (5) occasions.

During 2018, the CHAC held 46 meetings, made 523 recommendations on development applications, and carried out 128 site inspections.

The views of the CHAC were mainly requested on projects having a major impact on cultural heritage: major projects, impact on scheduled buildings, demolition, intensive alterations and additions, adverse visual impact, and development applications impacting on World Heritage Sites.

The engagement of new officers with the Superintendence improved the overall efficiency in handling the case-load and site inspections. Consequently, it was noted that there was on overall decrease in the number of applications referred by Superintendence officers to the CHAC, as well as the number of site inspections carried out be CHAC during the second half of 2018.

On the other hand there was an increase in the number of presentations to the CHAC on scheduling/de-scheduling in the second half of 2018. This was also mainly due to the increase of officers at the Superintendence which permitted work on statutory protection (de-scheduling and proposed new scheduling) to resume.

3. Cultural Heritage Monitoring

Archaeology monitoring

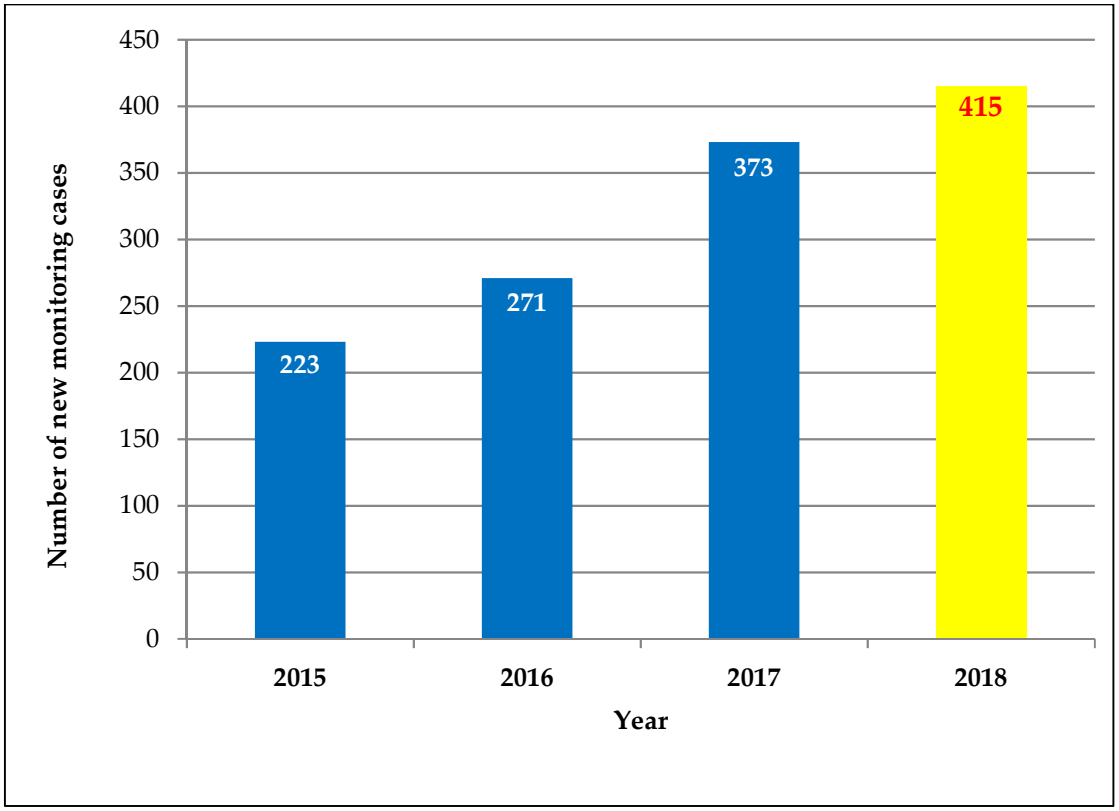
As part of is surveillance responsibilities the Superintendence regulates archaeological monitoring of ongoing development works. The objective of archaeological monitoring surveillance is to ensure that construction of works do not, either wilfully or by accident, result in the damaging of historic structures or of archaeological remains.

New archaeology monitoring cases in 2018:	415
Compared to 2017 (new cases only):	373[1]
Cases brought forward from 2017:	310
Active Archaeology monitoring cases during 2018:	725

Overview and main challenges/achievements: During 2018, the archaeology monitoring of the Superintendence continued to register a further increase in the number of new requests to start archaeological monitoring work. This continued upward trend in the number of requests reflects the increase of planning applications and placed further stress on the operations of this team.

Up to the last quarter of 2017 the archaeological monitoring team consisted of four officers who by the end of the year could not continue to provide their service for a variety of reasons. Two actually resumed duties in February 2018. This unavoidable situation placed further stress on the efficiency of the SCH, but which was brought under control by October 2018, mainly due to procedural reforms and increase of staff. Nonetheless, owing to the increased issue of planning permits and related requirement for archaeological monitoring the availability of freelance archaeological service providers registered with the SCH was itself placed under stress and could not adequately cater for the demand by developers to engage archaeological monitors within the timeframes they aspired.

[1] Reported value has been revised.



The number of new monitoring cases handled by the Superintendence in 2018 continued to see an increase compared to the previous year. **415** cases received in 2018, against the **373** cases of 2017.

Although the number of new monitoring cases increased in 2018 (42 more cases in 2018 when compared to 2017), the number of cases carried over from one year to another decreased (116 less cases carried over to 2018 when compared to 2017).

The overall volume of cases handled in 2018 by the monitoring section decreased from **799** cases to **725**. This underscores the great effort carried out by officers of the archaeology monitoring team during 2017 through 2018 to reduce the backlog as well increase efficiency.

Concurrently, officials of the archaeology monitoring team also focused on capacity building and the training needs of new staff within the section, particularly during the second half of 2018.

The staff complement of the archaeology monitoring team at the beginning of 2018 was of three (3) officials. One official resigned at the beginning of 2018, while another official was also required dedicated time to work on the EU-funded FRAGSUS project.

The archaeology monitoring team also noted the need to upscale quality and timeliness by several cultural heritage service providers registered with the SCH. Consequently, attention also needed to be directed towards understanding and addressing this issue to ensure that standards and timeliness are maintained.

During the third quarter of 2018, three new recruits joined the archaeology monitoring team, bringing the total members of staff in the archaeology monitoring section to five (5) cultural heritage executives and one (1) administrative assistant.

During the year under review the efficiency of this section increased considerably. The backlog on issuing Terms of Reference for new archaeology monitoring projects as well as for communicating instructions on ongoing projects that had accumulated from 2017 due to the lack of human resources in this section was overcome by October 2018. Moreover, the Superintendence increase its on-site presence to offer more timely advice and guidance to the cultural heritage service providers, architects as well as other technical persons. Backlog of issuing compliance certificates for planning-related clearances was also tackled during 2018.

In the last part of 2018 an assessment of the archaeological monitoring procedures currently in place was carried out. The objective is rationalisation and simplification of the process.

Some of the major archaeological interventions and discoveries in 2018 are shown in Section 6.

Cultural heritage service providers: The number of registered cultural heritage service providers at the end of 2018 amounted to twenty (20) – fourteen (14) working on a full-time basis, and six (6) on a part-time basis.

Registered cultural heritage service providers for 2018:	
Full-time:	14
Part-time:	6

While the number of full-time cultural heritage service providers remained constant when compared to 2017, those working on a part-time basis amounted to four (4) less. This drop must be seen in the context of the Superintendence recruiting new staff during 2018, some of which were previously working in the sector as cultural heritage service providers.

This register is accessible on the website of the Superintendence, together with a number of guidance documents defining the Operating Procedures and Standards to be followed in archaeological monitoring cases.

Built Heritage monitoring

The restoration and built heritage monitoring functions within the Heritage Planning Unit at the Planning Authority were officially transferred to the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage in November 2018 as a measure to lessen duplication and gaps and create more synergy within the functions of the SCH. Three officials from this unit were detailed to the Superintendence to oversee the migration process, for the continuation of business and to setup the Building Restoration Inspectorate (BRI) with the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage.

Two other officials from the Superintendence were assigned to the BRI to strengthen its capacity. The BRI together with the Archaeological Monitoring Unit within the Superintendence forms the Monitoring Unit.

The BRI is currently made up of five (5) officers, specialised and conversant in built heritage and/or cultural heritage conservation practices.

The main business functions of the BRI are to:

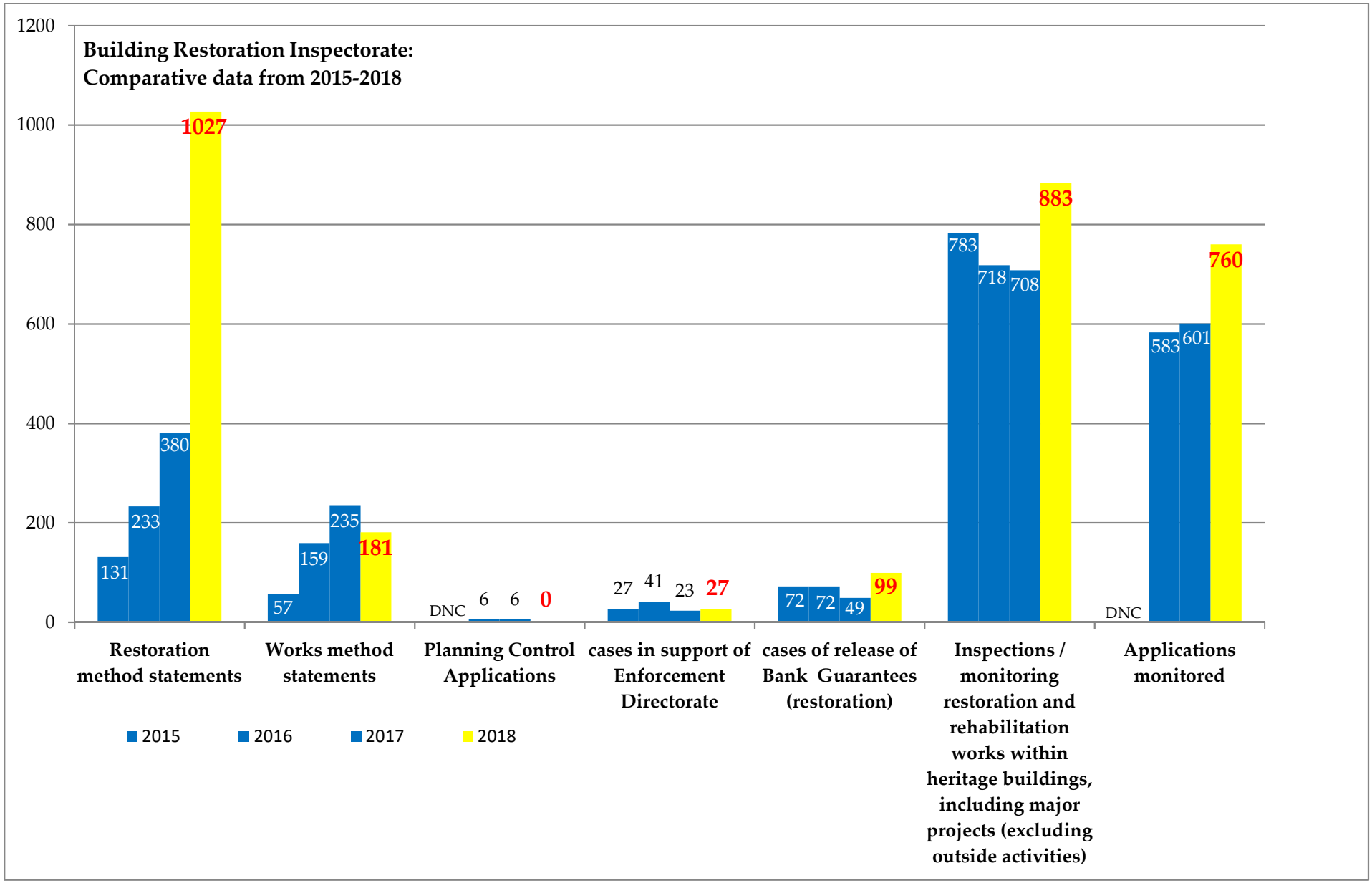
- provide professional assistance related to restoration practices of built heritage to the Superintendence;
- assess and review Restoration and Works Method Statements (RMSs / WMSs) during the consultation stages of the planning development application process;
- formulate and communicate to the Planning Authority the development permit conditions (including Bank Guarantees) to ensure that the built heritage is safeguarded during development;
- monitor restoration works. This includes the monitoring of trial patches before cleaning works are began and periodical monitoring to ensure works are in line with the approved methodology;
- provide professional assistance to architects during restoration – for instance when changes to the approved methodology and plans is required.
- Ensure the documentation of updates on progress of restoration projects.

Comparative data from 2015-2018 (including PA): The BRI saw a significant increase in the number of Restoration Method Statements (RMSs) assessed in 2018 when compared to previous years. In 2018 the number of RMSs assessed rose to **1027** from **380** the previous year.

The surge in the number of RMSs vetted was due to the *Irrestawra Darek* scheme financed and administered by the Planning Authority. This state initiative was introduced in 2017 with the objective to offer financial incentives directed towards the restoration/maintenance/rehabilitation of privately owned residential properties located within Urban Conservation Areas, as well as Grade 1 and Grade 2 scheduled properties.

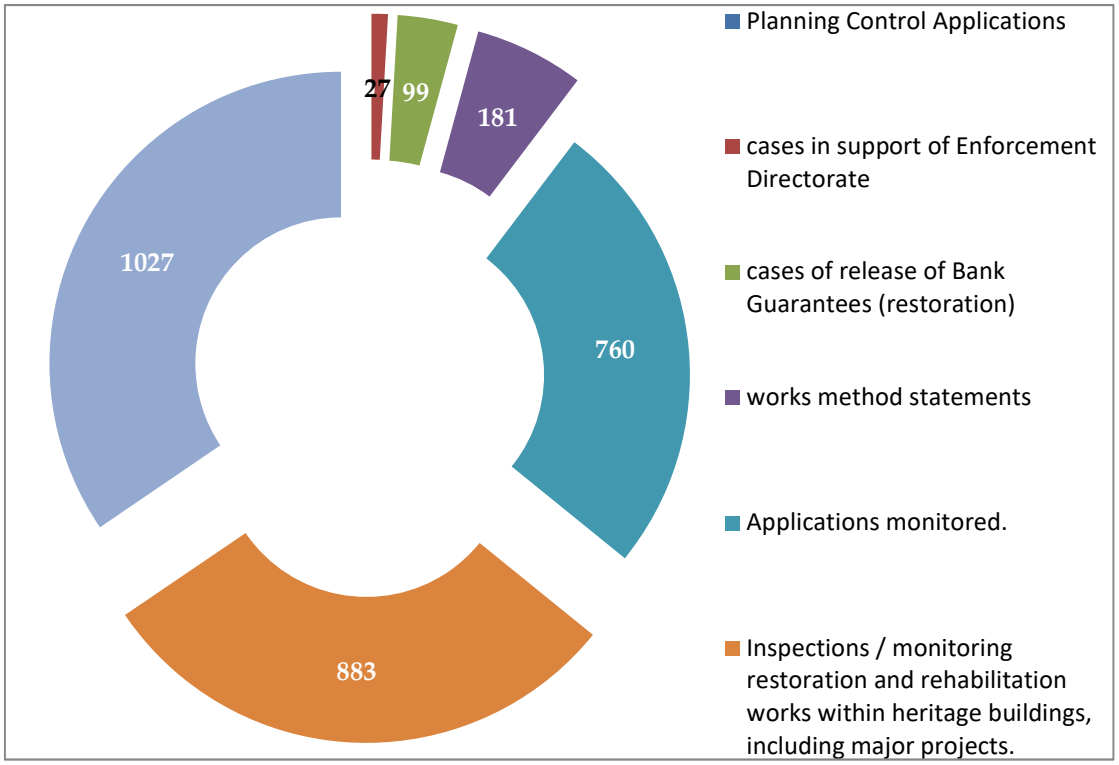
Increases over previous years was also noted in the number of inspections carried out in connection with the monitoring of restoration and rehabilitation works within heritage buildings, as well as development application monitored.

A chart showing resource effort within the BRI covering 2015 to 2018 is presented below.


Building Restoration Inspectorate:
Comparative data from 2015-2018
1200
1000
800
600
400
200
0
131
233
380
1027
57
159
235
181
DNC
6
6
0
27
41
23
27
72
72
49
99
783
718
708
883
DNC
583
601
760
Restoration method statements
Works method statements
Planning Control Applications
cases in support of Enforcement Directorate
cases of release of Bank Guarantees (restoration)
Inspections / monitoring restoration and rehabilitation works within heritage buildings, including major projects (excluding outside activities)
Applications monitored
2015
2016
2017
2018

During 2018 officials of the BRI (as well as former HPU) carried out assessments of **1027** RMSs and **181** WMSs. The team also inspected and monitored restoration and rehabilitation works within heritage buildings (including major projects) amounting to **883**. The RIU monitored a total of **760** applications and handled **27** cases in support of the Enforcement Directorate of the Planning Authority. The RIU also released **99** Bank Guarantees associated with Restoration works in 2018.

A graphical representation is presented in the chart below.



4. Museums and Sites

Guardianship Deeds

In keeping with its role at law, the Superintendent of Cultural Heritage is legally entrusted to enter into a Guardianship Deed on behalf of the State. Guardianship Deeds are management agreements that are specifically focused on ensuring the well-being and care of cultural heritage property. A Guardianship Deed is entered into for a period of ten years, after which the Guardianship Deed will need to be renewed.

Deeds are examined and considered on the basis of stringent conservation and management requirements. These requirements entail technical conservation and management policy documents which are attached to the Guardianship Deeds and submitted for ministerial and cabinet approval.

A Guardianship Deed may only be concluded with a Non-Governmental Organisation and with Local Councils following necessary authorisation from the Minister responsible for Culture and after recommendations made by the Committee of Guarantee. The concurrence of the Minister responsible for Lands is also sought during this process.

When a property is entrusted to a guardian through a public deed, no lease costs are imposed on the guardian. Consequently, all funds generated from that property as well as donations can be invested into the restoration, maintenance, rehabilitation and management needs of the cultural property in guardianship.

Guardianship Deeds also promote the active participation of the community in cultural heritage through voluntary work.

Renewal of Guardianship Deed

During the year under review, the Superintendence began the process to renew a Guardianship Deed with Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna for the Lascaris War Headquarters Complex. The Deed was signed in 2009.

This immovable property consists of:

- the Saluting Battery;
- underground structures (wine vaults and war rooms);
- St Peter and St Paul's Counter-guard.
- During the period covered by the Guardianship Deed, Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna invested in the restoration of the Saluting Battery, the Lascaris War Rooms, the War

Headquarter tunnels (under the Upper Barrakka gardens), the unfinished bunker, St Peter and St Paul's counterguard and the Garrison Church Crypt.

Further to their restoration, the above historical properties have also been made accessible to the general public and have become established visitor attractions.

Saluting Battery: Around 700 re-enactments/tours are held at the Saluting Battery throughout the year, in addition to the firing of the noon-day gun and evening gun. According to MTA sources the gun firing is viewed by some 700,000 individuals annually.

Lascaris War Rooms: The war rooms have been rehabilitated and are open to visitors six days a week. Works are currently focusing on the installation of a major permanent exhibition on Operation Husky, the invasion of Sicily in 1943.

Garrison Church Crypt (wine vaults): The site suffered from severe water ingress originating mainly from the Upper Barrakka gardens. Restoration works on this site have been completed and the area is being set up to accommodate the Saluting Battery Museum.

War Headquarter Tunnels under the Upper Barrakka Gardens: The War Headquarter Tunnels are being promoted as a stand-alone heritage attraction, as well as part of the larger complex which includes the Saluting Battery, Lascaris War Rooms and St Peter and St Paul's Counter-guard.

St Peter and St Paul's Counter-guard: The site is currently open to visitors as part of the tours of the War Headquarters tunnels. Guided tours are held regularly on a daily basis.

Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna also made use of funding from the European Regional Development Funds.

Status of Guardianship Deeds

The table below shows the status of the Guardianship Deeds up till the end of 2018.

	Name of Cultural Property	Locality	Name of Guardian	Year of Signature
1	Qalet Marku Tower	Naxxar	Din l-Art Ħelwa	2003 / Renewed 2013
2	Għallis Tower	Naxxar	Din l-Art Ħelwa	2003 / Renewed 2013
3	Red Tower (aka Sta Agatha Tower)	Mellieħa	Din l-Art Ħelwa	2003 / Renewed 2013
4	Wignacourt Tower	San Pawl il-Baħar	Din l-Art Ħelwa	2003 / Renewed 2013
5	Mamo Tower	Marsaskala	Din l-Art Ħelwa	2003 / Renewed 2013
6	Santa Maria Tower	Għajnsielem	Din l-Art Ħelwa	2003 / Renewed 2013
7	Dwejra Tower	San Lawrenz	Din l-Art Ħelwa	2003 / Renewed 2013
8	Santa Maria Battery	Għajnsielem	Din l-Art Ħelwa	2003 / Renewed 2013
9	Msida Bastion Cemetery	Floriana	Din l-Art Ħelwa	2003 / Renewed 2013
10	Lascaris War Headquarters Complex	Valletta	Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna	2009
11	WWII shelter at 25, Brittania Square	Tarxien	Tarxien Local Council	2009
12	WWII Shelter at Sta Ubaldesca Street	Paola	Fondazzjoni Wirt Paola	2010
13	Couvre Porte Barracks at Vittoriosa (10 rooms at lower level) and underlying WWII shelter	Vittoriosa	Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna	2011
14	Our Lady of Victory Church	Valletta	Din l-Art Ħelwa	2011
15	Wied Iż-Żurrieq Tower	Qrendi	Din l-Art Ħelwa	2013
16	Fort Rinella	Kalkara	Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna	2016
17	Madliena Tower and adjacent structures, Room off Mediterranean Street and Bridge and Weir	Pembroke	Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna	2016
18	Tower at Triq il-Wiesgħa	Xagħjra	Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna	2016
19	Three World War II Pill Boxes: Reserve Post R15 (Naxxar), AB1 Beach post (Mellieħa) and RAO beach post (Kalkara)	Naxxar Mellieħa Kalkara	Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna	2016
20	Notre Dame Gate	Vittoriosa	Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna	2016
21	St.Thomas Tower	Marsaskala	Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna	2016

Requests to carry out activities on cultural heritage sites

The Superintendence is also required to provide consent in relation to the discharge of fireworks from cultural heritage sites. Its authorisation is also required in the event of requests for filming at same.

The Superintendence received four (4) requests for consent for the discharge of fireworks during 2018:

- Glacis of Floriana fortifications, Pieta;
- Fort Ricasoli, Kalkara;
- Mina ta' l-Isla, Senglea;
- Misraħ l-Indipendenza, Valletta.

5. Movement of Goods

Import and Export of Cultural Goods

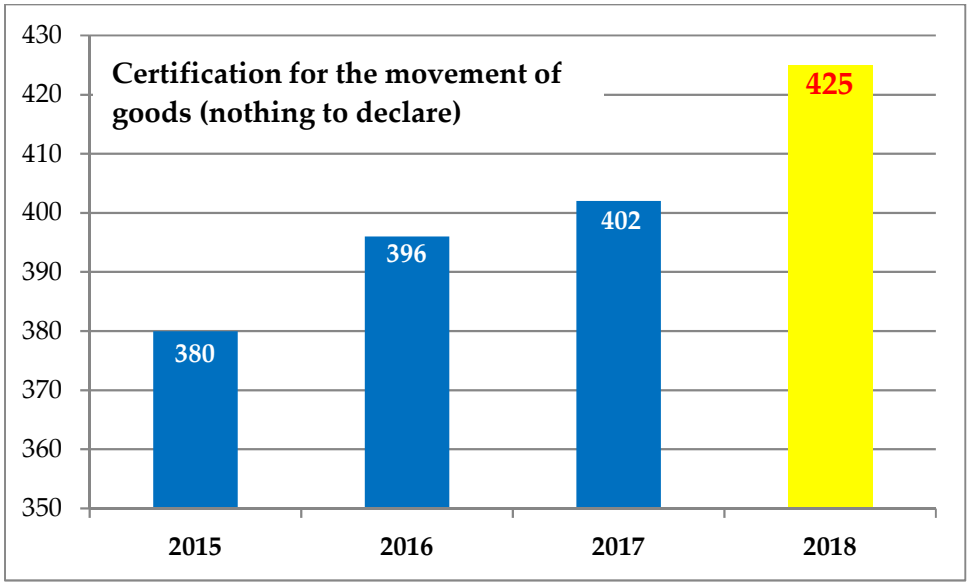
The Superintendence of Cultural Heritage regulates the import and export of cultural goods moving between Malta and EU Member States, as well as from, or to non-EU countries. These cases are referred to the Superintendence by the Customs Department or by Malta Post.

During the period under review, the Superintendence has continued to fulfil its role in monitoring the export or movement of cultural heritage items from Maltese territory, be this export to a country within the European Union or outside of it. This work was mainly carried out by one SCH officer who akso had to see to replying to planning consultations and act as the primary officer on surveillance and Court cases. As from October 2018 two new officers were assigned to tasks related to movable heritage as part of SCH's restructuring while also assisting in planning consultations.

Certification for the Movement of Goods (personal items excluding cultural heritage objects)

In keeping with long-standing practice, the Superintendence also reviews the export or movement of "personal items" to ensure that these items do not include cultural heritage items.

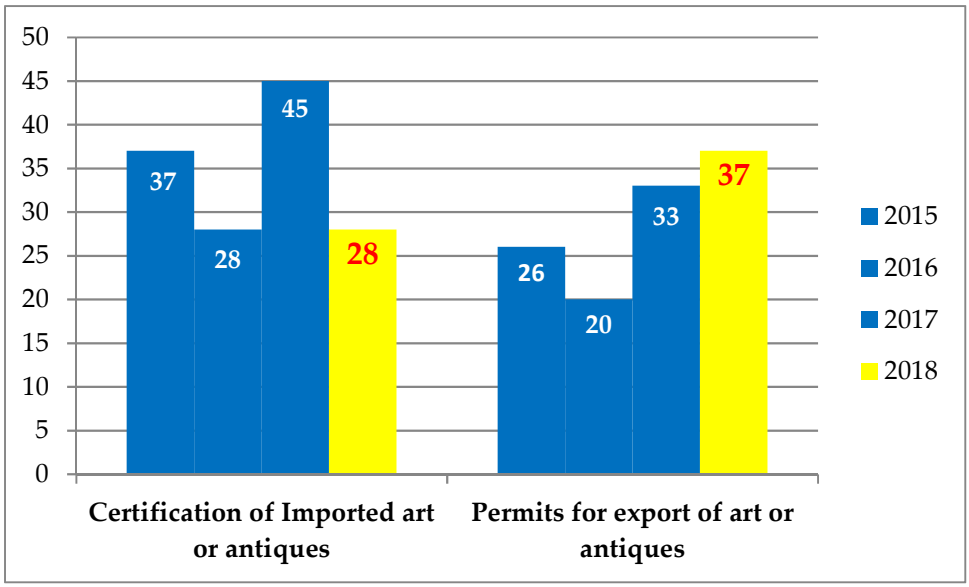
In the course of 2018, the Superintendence reviewed **425 cases** of export or movement, in which cases the exporter had declared that no item of cultural heritage was being exported. The number of cases marked an increase on previous years, being 23 cases more than in 2017 (**402** cases), 29 cases more than those processed in 2016 (**396** cases) and 45 cases more than cases processed in 2015 (**380** cases).



Export of Cultural Heritage Items Leaving the National Territory

As stated at law, the export of cultural heritage items from Malta requires permission from the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage. In the course of 2018, the Superintendence issued permission for export of cultural heritage items in **37** cases. Of these **37** cases, **27** cases were for the export of contemporary or decorative art. None of the cases treated required inspection of the items, since adequate information for assessment had been made available to the Superintendence.

In 2017, the number of permits issued amounted to **33,** while in 2016 and 2015 the number of permissions was **20** and **26** permissions respectively.



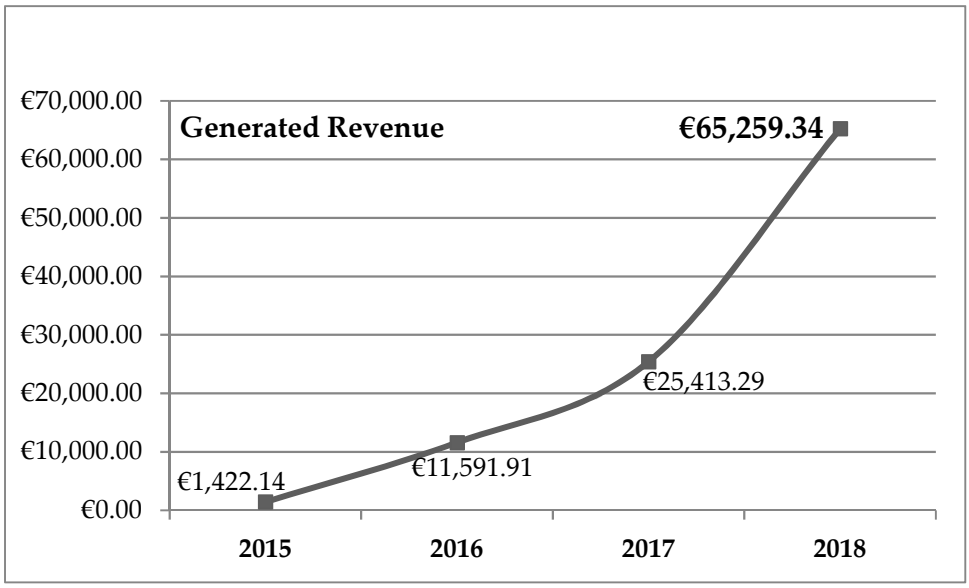
Inspection and Certification of Cultural Items Imported from Outside the European Union

As stated at law, the Superintendence is also called upon to inspect and certify cultural heritage items that are imported from outside the European Union. This process is initiated by the importer in order to comply with Customs procedures. A 5% of the value of the item in question is collected as per L.N.4 of 1968, as amended by L.N.104 of 1981 and L.N.407 of 2007.

Items inspected in 2018 included silverware, paintings, archaeological artefacts and oriental cultural objects.

In the course of 2018, the Superintendence inspected and certified imported cultural heritage items in **28** cases. The number of inspected items in 2017 amounted to **45** cases, while in 2016 and 2015 the Superintendence inspected **28** cases and **37** cases respectively.

These inspections of imported items generated revenue of **€65,259.34**. This was a marked increase when compared to the **€25,413.29** collected for import inspections in 2017, **€11,591.91** in 2016 and **€1,422.14** in 2015.



These noticeable, but unpredictable, spikes in revenue are indicative of the exceptional import of prestigious and costly items in the course of a given year.

The Customs Department at times requests the services of the Superintendence when items of suspected cultural value are imported from within or outside the EU without the proper documentation, or when it is suspected that the items imported are in breach of the Law of the exporting country. Such an instance in 2018 included the

examination of an antique Bible which was confiscated by the Customs Department as part of a wider operation involving several EU countries under the name of *Operation Pandora.*

Temporary Movement of Cultural Goods

The Superintendence has also reviewed and regulated a number of applications for the temporary export of cultural goods out of the Maltese territory for purposes of restoration, exhibition or for other cultural purposes. The main cases handled in 2018 are listed below:

- Temporary Export of Tapestries by St John's Co-Cathedral Foundation for restoration in Belgium;
- Temporary Export of Cultural Items for exhibition: "Valletta – Capitale D'Europa" at Sala Dei Gigli, Museo Di Palazzo Vecchio, Piazza Della Signoria, Firenze;
- Temporary Export by Heritage Malta and the Metropolitan Cathedral Museum of Paintings to Conversano Italy for exhibition: "Artemisia e i Pittori Del Conte – La Collezzione Di Giangirolamo II Acquaviva";
- Temporary Export of painting by Mattia Preti to Sicily for exhibition: "Santa Rosalia e la Peste" at the Palazzo Reale in Palermo;
- Temporary Export of historic document to France for exhibition: "Crac des Chevaliers" at the Cité L' Architecture at du Patrimoine, Paris;
- Temporary Export of historic piano to the United Kingdom for exhibition: "36 Hours: Jutland 1916 The Battle that Won the War" at the National Museum of the Royal Navy, Portsmouth.

Right of preference

As prescribed at Article 40 of the Cultural Heritage Act, "In the case of sale, export, exchange, emphyteutical grant or lease of an object of cultural property the Superintendent shall have the right, with the approval of the Minister in consultation with the Committee of acquiring the same, in preference to all others on equal conditions including consideration as that concluded between the parties".

In the course of 2018, this right was not exercised. Right of preference is generally carried out in connection with proposed export of cultural heritage items, or in the case of sale at auction. Such action (in connection with sale at auction) is generally initiated by Heritage Malta, with the intention of acquiring items deemed as significant assets for inclusion in the National Collection.

6. Cultural Heritage Research

One of the key functions of the Superintendence is to regulate and promote cultural heritage and scientific research in Malta. This function is carried out in collaboration with a range of Maltese and international partner organisations and colleagues.

Research and Documentation

During the year under review the Superintendence has received a number of requests to carry out research and investigations into Malta's cultural heritage from both local and foreign institutions.

An overview of the requests received is below.

University of Malta: The University has continued on its current research projects relating to pottery analysis.

Heritage Malta: Heritage Malta has submitted a number of requests to carry out digital recording and investigations so as to formulate management plans for a number of the sites for which it is responsible. As part of the conditions included in the consents issued by the Superintendence, opportunities have been sought for officials of the Superintendence to participate in these projects. This initiative serves as a means to increase individual capabilities (Continuous Professional Development) and in so doing, increasing the overall expertise and know-how of the Superintendence.

Further to consents issued in 2018, the first such participation was carried out in January-February 2019 when officers of the Superintendence collaborated with Heritage Malta in the re-excavation of spoil deposits at *Għar Dalam*.

Others: A number of international academic institutions and academics have approached the Superintendence with requests for collaboration on various research projects relating to both movable and immovable cultural heritage. These projects do not necessarily address the more pressing national research requirements. Notwithstanding, the proposals deemed to be academically valid and which are intended to offer fresh insights into the known cultural heritage as well as address lacunae in the archaeological record are being strongly encouraged.

Government agencies: The Superintendence has started to collaborate with government agencies in providing services relating to investigatory explorations, planned over very short timeframes, and which are aimed at informing the planning process. The aim of these collaborations is to reduce bureaucratic processes between governments departments.

FRAGSUS (Fragility and Sustainability in Island Environments: Cultural Change and Collapse in Prehistory) – Project Funded by the European Research Council

The FRAGSUS team presented the findings from the project in a public conference held by the ERC funded FRAGSUS project on 17 March 2018. During this conference Superintendence representative, Bernardette Mercieca-Spiteri, presented the findings from the study of the human remains from the Xagħra Circle.

2018 also saw the continuation of the write-up for the publication of the study of the prehistoric human remains from the Xagħra Circle burial complex. The publication writing will be continued and sent for publication in 2019.

Major Archaeological Interventions and Discoveries in 2018

As already reported in Section 3 above, the archaeological monitoring section of the SCH is continuously engaged with development-driven archaeological investigations. Several discoveries having varying degree of cultural heritage value are uncovered during monitored works. Below are a few of the major discoveries in 2018.

Marsa/Paola Junction, Vjal Santa Lucija, Vjal Sir Paul Boffa, Triq Garibaldi, Triq Aldo Moro, Triq il-Labour, Triq Hal Qormi, Industrial Estate, Marsa

During the archaeological surveillance of the infrastructural works at the Marsa/Paola Junction, a number of ancient features were discovered and investigated under the direction of the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage. The features included three ancient tombs probably dating to the Roman period which were found truncated possibly in antiquity but still containing human remains and ancient cultural material; evidence of ancient quarrying; and a set of cart-ruts. Most of the investigated features were preserved in situ and back-filled although some of the features had to be rock-cut since major services relating to water/drainage management were planned to pass through the archaeological area.

Malta Carnival Experience: Site at, Marsa Government Garage, Triq Troubridge c/w Triq il-Biccerija, Marsa

The site allocated for the construction of the Malta Carnival Experience, was archaeologically surveilled during the material removal works. During these works a number of features were uncovered including industrial rock-cut features and installations, ancient quarries, a reservoir and other cuts. There is also possible evidence of ancient funerary function on the site since some human bones were retrieved from the surface of a filled pit – this part of the site has yet to be investigated should further soil clearing works occur in this area in 2019.

Blackley Buildings, Our Lady of sorrows Str c/w Gwardamangia Hill c/w, Triq Blackley, Pieta, Malta

During the archaeological surveillance of the soil removal works at the Blackley site, a number of historical features were unearthed, some of which are related to the old bakery and living quarters of the bakers. These features include a large arched reservoir and water channels possibly connecting to it. A number of agricultural rectangular cuts in the rock were also found and investigated. Soil removal works will continue in 2019, and further features are expected to be unearthed during surveillance. The large arched reservoir is planned to be retained for possible re-usage at the site.

Site off, Triq Caruana Caruana, Safi Aviation Park, Tal-Karwija, Safi, Malta

The area of Safi Aviation Park has in recent years revealed intense archaeological features ranging from classical tombs and catacombs to a vast number of ancient silos, as well as numerous agricultural rock-cut features and wells making this area in Safi of high archaeological importance.

During the soil clearing works for the preparation of the construction of an aircraft hangar in 2018, the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage received notification that archaeological remains where unearthed. The development permit did not include a monitoring condition therefore development works carried out before and during the discoveries were not archaeologically surveilled. On arrival at the site after the discovery notification, Superintendence officers unfortunately found that eight ancient silos had been excavated from their fills by the developers and their fills removed from the site. Following this incident the Superintendence gave direction for the remaining fills that remained in situ in some of these silos to be archaeologically excavated by archaeologists. The fills collected from the silos are waiting to be processed so that the ancient cultural material from the soil can be retrieved and studied in order to continue interpreting these ancient features.

A further 3 silos were found at the site which were left unexcavated and preserved for future generations. Following their careful documentation the emptied eight silos were filled with concrete since this was required for construction stability. Apart from the eleven ancient silos, numerous agricultural trenches, a well and possible cart-ruts were unearthed during this project.

Site at, Bulk 1, Malta International Airport, Luqa

The project included the demolition of fuel tanks and construction of new fuel storage facilities. During the archaeological surveillance of the material removal above the rock surface at the site an underground rock-cut feature was discovered. This feature includes an access shaft leading to a corridor. It remains unclear to what period and function this feature had. Agricultural trenches and wells were also unearthed at this site.

Manoel Island, Gzira

Following a series of small investigative pits carried out by the Superintendence in 2017, the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage continued with its investigations in Manoel Island in 2018. These investigations are being carried out in order to inform heritage officers better on the heritage potential of the areas which are being proposed for development by MIDI plc.

The archaeological investigation in 2018 focused in the location of the St. George's Cemetery which dates back to the British period. Archaeological investigations are still being carried out to identify whether the cemetery still survives and to what extent. 2019 will see further investigations related to the historical cemetery on the Island.

The Cloisters, Triq Imrabat c/w Bonavita c/w, Triq Is-Sorijiet, San Giljan, Malta

Following demolition works, the site was cleared from soil under archaeological surveillance. The works revealed a series of long regular channels, a number of rectangular cuts and one truncated bell shaped well all relating to gardening. Surveillance of soil removal works will continue into 2019.

Trenching works along Triq il-Lellux, Rabat

In 2018, WSC carried out excavation works along Triq il-Lellux, Rabat. During these works an ancient tomb was found together with other rock-cut features related to water management and agriculture. These features were archaeological excavated under the direction of the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage.

New University Campus Residence, Ta' Gjalpos, off Triq San Gwann tal-Ghorghar, Msida

During the archaeological surveillance of the clearing works at the area where the new university campus residence is planned to be constructed, several rock-cut features including evidence of quarrying, wells, cart-ruts, and agricultural trenches were identified. The Superintendence directed in the investigations on the site. The Superintendence directed the developers to preserve the cart-ruts in particular and continued surveilling the site through the rock-cutting work since an ancient tomb had been found in the past just a few meters away from the development limits.

American University of Malta - Parking area at Triq il-Monsinjur Panzavecchia c/w Triq tal-Karmnu, Cospicua, Malta

The site for development is located in the area between Senglea and Bormla and originally formed part of the Senglea land-front fortifications. The site was modified in the early 19th Century during which the fortifications where removed and a market place was constructed to serve the locality. In 2018 the Superintendence carried out pre-development investigations which involved clearing works with archaeology surveillance. During these investigations the foundations for the Senglea Market Building was identified and documented under the direction of the Superintendence.

Site at, Triq Fisher, Mgarr, Malta
This unbuilt site was archaeologically evaluated prior to construction works. During the investigation of this field a number of features were uncovered including a rock-cut tomb of one chamber and a series of agricultural trenches**.**

New Street off Sir Temi Zammit Street, Zebbiegh; area north of Zebbiegh church
Development works within this site footprint, led to the discovery of a classical site. The features were discovered in 2006 and investigated under the direction of the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage. Features discovered on site consisted of a cave, cart ruts, a classical cistern, quarrying and a kiln. The excavation of these features resumed in 2017 and is still ongoing. All of the features discovered on site have been preserved in situ and integrated on site.

48, Triq Francesco Azzopardi, Tal-Virtu, Rabat, Malta
During an archaeological evaluation for part of the footprint of the site, remains of a tomb were discovered. Most of the shaft of the tomb discovered had been truncated during works in the adjacent 3rd party property. The shaft and chamber did not hold any archaeological material. After the issuing of the permit, further works were carried out within the built area of the site. Parts of an already mutilated quarry were discovered during this intervention. The tomb has been sealed and preserved in situ.

Collaboration with Heritage Malta, University of Malta, and other entities

In keeping with its function at law, the Superintendence is the state-entity on behalf of government that is legally-entrusted with authorising "archaeological or palaeontological exploration on land as well as in the territorial waters or in the contiguous zone in Malta".

Land-based research: The Superintendence also issued consents aimed at promoting research in the field of cultural heritage. The research projects, which are still ongoing, include archaeological excavations for research purposes as well as the use of archaeological dating techniques and scientific analysis on a number of artefacts.

Underwater/maritime-based research: The Superintendence received the following requests for underwater excavations and studies. These initiatives were spearheaded by Prof. Timmy Gambin (University of Malta):

- Notification of the continuation of a seabed survey (Malta Shipwreck Survey Project) via an autonomous underwater vehicle;

- Underwater excavation in Salina Bay of a possible Roman/Byzantine period deposit;
- Underwater excavation of the B24 bomber for the repatriation of the remains of an airman;
- Excavation of the Phoenician wreck.

The Superintendence also held meetings with Prof. Gambin, in his capacity as head of the newly formed Underwater Cultural Heritage Unit (UCHU) within Heritage Malta to manage a selection of underwater cultural sites on similar basis as those on land opened for the public. The meetings focused on definition of roles between the remit of Heritage Malta when acting as the operator of a number of wrecks, and the role of the SCH as a regulator being retained.

During 2018 the Superintendence also received in excess of 130 requests for dives on historic underwater wrecks. Requests for diving using submarines, and filming of historic wrecks have also been received.

7. SCH's Corporate Obligations

The Superintendence also provides valuable policy guidance to Government and public entities in the cultural heritage sector.

Participation on the Committee of Guarantee

The Committee of Guarantee is set up by the Cultural Heritage Act with the function of coordinating actions by the cultural heritage bodies operating in Malta and to provide high-level advice to the Minister on cultural heritage issues. The Superintendent of Cultural Heritage is an *ex officio* member of the Committee.

The Superintendence provides both technical and policy guidance to the Committee of Guarantee on a number of issues. The main areas of collaboration between the Superintendence and the Committee of Guarantee include:

- The process of revision and reform of the Cultural Heritage Act 2002;
- The setting up of the Heritage fund;
- The organisation of the National Forum for Cultural Heritage.

Participation in other policy-related Committees

Apart from participation in the Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee, the Superintendent also attends meetings of committees as an *ex officio* member or a representative on the following:

- Committee of Guarantee (*ex officio*);
- Board tal-Warrants tar-Restawraturi (*ex officio*);
- Intangible Heritage Committee (Department of Culture);
- National Archives Committee (National Archives Directorate);
- Planning Authority Council (*ex officio*, no voting powers, only on cultural heritage matters);
- National Mirror Committee on Standards (Restoration) (MCCAA);
- World Heritage Sites Technical Committee (Malta Ambassador to UNESCO).

Cultural Heritage Act (Revisions)

The revisions of the CHA (CAP 445) were mostly concluded by the end of 2017. The incoming Superintendent asked to review the draft to familiarise and make some last minute suggestions. Eventually, the Bill was discussed at the Select Committee at Parliament and concluded by February 2019.

Ratification of International Conventions Relating to Cultural Heritage

Malta has not signed or ratified a number of important international conventions related to the field of cultural heritage. The conventions to be ratified refer to a number of sensitive areas in cultural heritage management. Subjects covered by these conventions range from the illegal trafficking of cultural goods, to the safeguarding of maritime cultural heritage and the intangible cultural heritage. Subjects covered by these conventions range from the illegal trafficking of cultural goods, to the safeguarding of maritime cultural heritage and the intangible cultural heritage. Ratification of these legal documents is becoming a high priority.

In 2014 the Superintendence was tasked by the Ministry for Justice, Culture and Local Government to undertake a broad evaluation of pending conventions and of their impact on Maltese legislation should they be adopted.

No progress on this aspect may be reported for 2018. The Superintendence will be re-activating its engagement in this area during 2019, subject to dedicated resources being made available.

This review covers ten separate conventions by different international bodies:

- Council of Europe;
- European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Revised), Valletta 1992 (Valletta Convention 1992);
- European Landscape Convention, Florence 2000 (Florence Convention 2000);
- Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society, Faro 2005 (Faro Convention 2005);
- UNESCO;
- Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, The Hague 1954 (Hague Convention 1954);
- Protocol to the Hague Convention of 1954 for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, The Hague 1954 (Hague Protocol 1954);
- Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, Paris 1970;
- Convention of the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage, Paris 2001;
- Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Paris 2003;
- Second Protocol to the Hague Convention of 1954 for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, The Hague 1999 (Hague 2nd Protocol 1999);
- UNIDROIT;
- Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects, Roma 1995.

8. Public Outreach

One of the key functions of the Superintendence is to regulate and promote cultural heritage and scientific research in Malta. This function is carried out in collaboration with a range of Maltese and international partner organisations and colleagues.

Exhibitions and Publications

An exhibition about Medieval archaeological remains discovered during development-led archaeological monitoring under the direction of the SCH was held in collaboration between the SCH and Heritage Malta. The exhibition was inaugurated by Hon Dr Owen Bonnici, Minister for Justice, Culture and Local Government. The archaeological artefacts were retrieved from a site in Mdina (2008) and another from Safi (2015), representing centre and periphery of Medieval Malta's urban landscape; fine imported wares and crude local fabric. These discoveries helped shed light in a scientific and academic manner on an otherwise dark age about which lacuna in data is often conveniently filled in by unfounded hypothesis or myths. The exhibition was held at the National Museum of Archaeology, Valletta from October to December 2018 and also published a brief monograph authored by Nathaniel Cutajar who led the excavations on behalf of the SCH and who also organised the exhibition. Due to high attendance and demand Heritage Malta extended this exhibition until March 2019.

The SCH also facilitated a short exhibition of early modern artefacts retrieved from development-led archaeological monitoring under the direction of the SCH, which was held in collaboration between the SCH and the National Library of Malta. The archaeological artefacts were retrieved from sites in Valletta during the past years. These discoveries helped to provide evidence of past life and redevelopment in Valletta through scientific and academic approaches and which compliment information derived from stylistic developments in architecture and archival documents. The exhibition was held at the Bibliotheca, Valletta in December 2018 in compliment to a series of lectures organised by the National Library entitled Cities, Harbours and Artefacts and coordinated by Maroma Camilleri and Mevrick Spiteri.

FRAGSUS

The EU-funded FRAGSUS project also incorporated an exhibition at the Museum of Archaeology, Valletta of the findings from the studies and investigations carried out during the projects duration. The SCH assisted with the selection of the human remains to be displayed as well the compilation of the posters used during this exhibition.